

*** NOTE: TO RETURN TO THIS PAGE, CLICK ON THE COUNTY SEAL ***

[CLICK HERE FOR CEO's REPORT DATED JULY 8, 2011](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR CEO's REPORT DATED JULY 18, 2011](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR POLICY ROUNDTABLE's REPORT DATED SEPTEMBER 14, 2011](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR CEO's REPORT DATED FEBRUARY 10, 2012](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR CEO's REPORT DATED JULY 20, 2012](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR CEO's REPORT DATED JANUARY 31, 2013](#)



WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

July 8, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

IMPLEMENTING THE STRENGTHENING FAMILIES APPROACH – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY

On March 29, 2011, your Board adopted the updated Child Care Policy Framework and directed the Office of Child Care to report back on various topics. This report addresses how the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (IDCFS) and partner organizations implemented the Strengthening Families approach to reduce child abuse and neglect.

Convened by IDCFS, Strengthening Families Illinois (SFI) includes over 40 State and community partners. SFI has been in place since 2005 and has amassed a number of significant accomplishments. This report focuses on four areas of particular interest for stakeholders in Los Angeles County:

- School Readiness Initiative – Recognizing the importance of being ready for school and the particular challenges that young children in the child welfare system face, IDCFS defined “early education” as an entitlement for all three to five year old children in foster care. Current practice is to ensure that every child between three to five years of age in foster care is enrolled and attending a high quality early learning program.
- SFI Learning Networks – Over 100 child development centers are involved in ongoing professional development designed to improve their services to children

“To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service”

**Please Conserve Paper – This Document and Copies are Two-Sided
Intra-County Correspondence Sent Electronically Only**

and families. Many of these trainings are designed to accommodate both child welfare caseworkers and child development program staff.

- Parent Leadership in Communities – SFI enlisted an advertising firm to work with parents to translate the Protective Factors into “straightforward language.” The five Protective Factors are positive attributes which, when present, are linked to lower incidence of child abuse and neglect. The effort to tailor the messages to parents contributed to the successful engagement of parents through the SFI Parent Cafés.
- Family Advocacy Centers – IDCFS has funded 14 community based organizations to empower and support families as they navigate the child welfare system.

These programs are explored more fully in the attached document.

The Strengthening Families approach has succeeded in reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect. This approach holds promise for the children and families in Los Angeles County.

Section F of the attached report includes five recommendations for how Los Angeles County could begin the process of integrating this approach into the practice models of selected County departments and guide our work with community partners.

Should your staff have questions regarding the content of the report, they can contact Kathy House, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, at (213) 974-4530.

WTF:KH
LB:KMS:eb

Attachments

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel

Strengthening Families Illinois: Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Los Angeles County

A. Introduction

In 2010, the Illinois Department of Children and Families (IDCFS) fielded 109,186 reports of child abuse. Investigations of those reports revealed credible evidence of abuse or neglect in 28,968 cases. The volume of this caseload – which is comparable to that managed by the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services – represents incalculable trauma to thousands of young children and their families, a significant cost to the public sector, and a challenging work load for IDCFS.

Mr. Erwin McEwen, Director of IDCFS, is committed to changing the reality and the perception of IDCFS from the entity “that takes your kids away” to an organization that can “help and support parents who are stressed and struggling to meet the needs of their children”.¹ In his remarks to the Strengthening Families Leadership Summit, Mr. McEwen stated:

“DCFS should not be in the business of raising children, but in the business of strengthening families.”²

The process of transforming IDCFS has involved community partners and parents, and has been guided by the principles of the Strengthening Families approach and the promotion of the Protective Factors.

The Strengthening Families approach caught the attention of Illinois and 36 other states, as well as philanthropic organizations, public and community-based service providers in Los Angeles County. The LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment is a champion of Strengthening Families. First 5 LA adopted the Strengthening Families approach prior to implementing its Partnerships for Families (PFF) initiative and has actively incorporated these principles and activities into its strategies for preventing child maltreatment. The Strengthening Families approach has influenced the work of the Education Coordinating Council, most notably the Council’s focus on early childhood education. The Magnolia Place Community Initiative is “designed to nurture the child, strengthen the family and build a caring community.”³ Within a number of County departments, the Strengthening Families approach is informing the design and implementation of services.

Could service providers in Los Angeles County realize better outcomes by making an intentional commitment to integrate the Strengthening Families approach into their work with children, families and communities? The goals outlined by Strengthening Families Illinois and the lessons learned over the past six years suggest that substantial and positive change is possible when the public, private and philanthropic sectors work collaboratively to integrate the Strengthening Families approach into their practice models.

This document begins with a brief description of the Strengthening Families approach. The next section describes how IDCFS, in collaboration with community partners, integrated the Strengthening Families approach into four program areas. The final section is devoted to recommendations for integrating the Strengthening Families approach into our work with children and families in Los Angeles County.

B. What is the Strengthening Families Approach?

The Strengthening Families approach was developed by the Center for Study of Social Policy (CSSP) as a feasible, systematic way to impact large numbers of children and families before abuse or neglect occurred. In 2001, Strengthening Families was launched with an emphasis on early care and education programs, building on that sector's relationships with both children and families. Since then, Strengthening Families' partners have expanded in both number and type of organization.

As a result of their research and conversations with practitioners in child welfare, family support and early childhood, CSSP identified five positive attributes - referred to as Protective Factors - which are linked to lower incidence of child abuse and neglect. The Protective Factors are:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Children's social and emotional development

Research has demonstrated that when these Protective Factors are present and robust, the occurrence of child abuse and neglect is significantly reduced. By providing parents with "what they need to parent effectively, even under stress," the Protective Factors help keep families strong. This strategy for dealing with child neglect and abuse shows great promise because:

- It works.
- It is cost effective. Activities that build the Protective Factors can be incorporated into existing programs and systems - such as early childhood education and child welfare, at little cost.
- There is high interest in preventing abuse. A National Association for the Education of Young Children survey showed that 97 percent of responding programs wanted to do more to prevent child maltreatment.⁴

C. Strengthening Families Illinois (SFI)

In 2004, CSPP solicited proposals from states throughout the country to pilot Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education, a child abuse prevention strategy based on the Protective Factors. Proposals from Illinois and six other states were selected. In 2005, the IDCFS convened more than 20 collaborative partner organizations and state agencies, child welfare, child abuse prevention, family support, early childhood education as well as parents and community leaders to promote the protective factors across systems and settings. Now known as Strengthening Families Illinois (SFI), the collaboration has doubled in size, drawing members from over 40 agencies, State departments and parent leaders. The collaboration continues to be chaired by the director of IDCFS and its work is currently guided by the Strengthening Families Illinois Strategic Plan 2009-2014.

The overall purpose of SFI is to prevent child abuse and neglect and to promote the health and well-being of children and families by working with child care centers and child welfare agency staff to incorporate evidence-based protective factors in early childhood services and systems statewide.

Collaborative partners advance the mission of SFI by:

- Incorporating the Strengthening Families approach into their work;
- Contributing financial resources to the collaboration;
- Promoting an understanding of the Strengthening Families approach through their communications including but not limited to publications and conferences; and
- Dedicating staff time to serve on the SFI Leadership Team and various workgroups.

SFI structure includes a Leadership Team, Work Groups, and the full collaborative. The Strengthening Families Leadership Team is chaired by the Director of IDCFS and consists of one executive level representative from each of the partner organizations, the chairs of Strengthening Families Work Groups, senior staff of DCFS, the lead from each of the pilot sites, and five parent representatives.

The following offers a brief description of the SFI Work Groups:

- *Building Resiliency Work Group*

This Work Group advises and supports SFI on building the capacity of early childhood centers to effectively address mental health issues in children and adults, to mitigate the impact of trauma on young children, and to promote children's social and emotional well-being. In addition, this Work Group has been key to integrating the building resiliency efforts of SFI, IDCFS, and the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership.

The recommendation to add a sixth Protective Factor on Healthy Parent Child Relationships emerged from this Work Group, as did support for the development of the "Understanding Trauma and Children's Exposure to Violence" curriculum.

- *Evaluation Work Group*

This Work Group is charged with documenting the impact of the Strengthening Families approach on childcare centers, child welfare agency staff, and families. Among its accomplishments are the development of Learning Network reporting forms, and staff and parent questionnaires. SFI Parent Café evaluations show very positive responses, with 99 percent of participants reporting that the cafes were helpful and 87 percent indicating the intent to change their behavior based on information shared at a Parent Café.

This Work Group is currently assessing the impact of SFI on early childhood centers.

- *Professional Development and Training Work Group*

The Professional Development Work Group advises and supports SFI by developing high quality professional development topics that support the implementation of Strengthening Families. Recognizing both the importance of collaboration between the child welfare and early learning communities, and the need for participants from each discipline to learn about the other, the Professional Development and Training Work Group recommended that training be developed to deal specifically with the importance of collaborative relationships. Most SFI training sessions are designed to accommodate persons from both disciplines. Attachment I includes examples of two SFI training descriptions provided by the Midwest Learning Center for Family Support.

This Work Group also advises SFI on the accessibility of training opportunities for early childhood professionals, child welfare staff, and parents; offers guidance to the Midwest Learning Center for Family Support as they develop SFI training modules; and contribute to the quality assurance system for SFI training.

D. Impact of SFI on Policies and Practices

The implementation of SFI has triggered policy and practice changes within IDCFS and among SFI partners. This section summarizes four areas where change has occurred, including:

1. **School Readiness Approach** involves a policy change within IDCFS and increased collaboration with early education sector;
2. **SFI Learning Networks** include early education programs that have made a substantial commitment to ongoing professional development and collaboration with IDCFS;
3. **Parent Leadership in Communities** changes how SFI partners engage with parents and the role of parents working with SFI partners;
4. **Family Advocacy Centers**, while funded by IDCFS, have empowered families as they navigate the child welfare system.

The scope of SFI is far broader than these four areas. The following is intended to highlight the impact of SFI on various stakeholders and the depth of the collaboration makes this approach so exciting.

1. School Readiness Initiative

Illinois was the first state in the country to require that all children between three and five years of age in the foster care system be enrolled in and attend a quality early learning program. This mandate for early education set IDCFS apart from most jurisdictions, the policy and planning decisions leading to its implementation were as innovative as the mandate.

IDCFS redefined early education as an “educational entitlement” for young children rather than a support service for employed foster parents. As such, enrollment has been targeted to Head Start, Pre-K and nationally accredited early care and education programs. These programs tend to be better equipped to promote school readiness among young children, including those who have experienced the trauma of abuse and/or neglect. It should be noted that the IDCFS

definition of “school readiness” was framed broadly and included “the social, emotional and cognitive well being of young children.”

IDCFS also recognized that the benefits of high quality early education are achieved when participation is stable and consistent over time. Therefore, caseworkers are urged to consider sustaining the child’s participation in the early education program when changes in foster care placement or permanency surface. When change is absolutely necessary, caseworkers and teachers are expected to assist children with the transition process.

Once early education became a required component of the IDCFS service plan for children between three and five years of age, caseworkers were responsible for children being enrolled in and attending such programs. “Does Not Apply” is no longer an acceptable entry in the education field of a young child’s service plan.

Child welfare agencies and the early childhood community began shifting their practices well before the mandate was announced. In fact, the following activities were undertaken to build support for the early education mandate:

1. All deputy directors were engaged and support was enlisted to promote the importance of the early education message.
2. A needs assessment was conducted to determine what frontline caseworkers needed to place children in quality early education programs.
3. The child welfare training department was enlisted to develop desk aids, an implementation manual and related training.
4. Key messages and documents regarding the importance of early education were developed and disseminated by IDCFS internally and to foster parents.
5. State child care, Head Start and Education departments drafted guidelines for caseworkers to facilitate the placement of children in high quality early education programs.
6. Early education was added as a component of the education passport for foster children.
7. Stakeholders in the early education community were engaged and introduced to the IDCFS role as “parent” for wards and the intent to enroll children in high quality early education programs.
8. Collaborative agreements were established with Head Start and other high quality early learning programs to ensure children in the foster care system from birth to five had access and could be enrolled.
9. Foster parent councils were engaged and information of the importance of early education was shared. Potential problem areas such as transportation, scheduling, etc. were addressed.

By December 2004 when the Director of IDCFS announced that, within one year, all three to five year olds in foster care would be enrolled in high quality early education programs, the goal

was achievable. Front line workers had both the administrative tools and relationships with early learning programs needed to facilitate enrollment. Despite the shortage of subsidized spaces, caseworkers were largely successful in enrolling their young clients in high quality early education programs.

This work continues and is reflected in the SFI 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. In addition to ensuring that 100 percent of children in the foster care system attend quality early learning programs, Program Level Outcomes include:

1. Increase the number of early childhood providers incorporating Strengthening Families
2. Caseworkers and early childhood program staff collaborate in service planning for children in the child welfare system

The SFI Project Director described IDCFS' success at enrolling preschool age foster children in high quality early education programs. She noted however, that the IDCFS and SFI are still struggling with how to best serve infants and toddlers in the child welfare system. While the primary developmental task for this age group is bonding and attachment, young children in the child welfare system are also faced with the impact of trauma.

2. SFI Learning Networks

Six SFI Learning Networks were launched between 2005 and 2006. Each network included an early education center that served as the "hub" with seven to ten early childhood education centers participating in the network. By 2010, the number of Networks had increased to 14; and over 100 early childhood programs were participating in networks throughout Illinois. The SFI Learning Networks are the mechanism used to embed the Strengthening Families approach in early education programs, to promote ongoing collaboration with local child welfare staff, and to increase parent engagement.

SFI Learning Network members participate in training and professional development opportunities and monthly peer to peer network meetings, complete the Strengthening Families self assessment, and develop action plans to help strengthen their practice and strategies focused on building strong relationships with parents.

3. Parent Leadership in Communities

The *Love Is Not Enough* (LINE) campaign is a parent-led effort aimed at keeping families strong. The campaign, which is sponsored by SFI, addresses the challenges that confront parents and offers a variety of ways for parents to connect, share ideas and get involved. While the campaign advances an understanding of the protective factors, parents advising the project believed that information on the protective factors needed to be communicated in more straightforward language. Better World Advertising worked with parents to "translate" the Protective Factors. The following chart shows the LINE campaign messages and the corresponding Protective Factors.

Love is Not Enough (LINE) Campaign Messages	Protective Factors
Be strong and flexible	Parental Resilience
Parents need friends	Social Connections
Being a great parent is part natural and part learned	Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
We all need help sometimes	Concrete Support in Times of Need
Parents need to help their children communicate	Social and Emotional Competence of Children
Give your children the love and respect they need	Healthy Parent – Child Relationships

The LINE campaign uses Parent Cafés to connect with parents, foster friendships, and introduce the Protective Factors. Building on the World Café model,⁵ Parent Cafés aim to tap into the collective wisdom available in every community to support parents and prevent child abuse and neglect. Conducted in a safe and supportive environment, all participants are encouraged to contribute to the conversation and to listen as others share their insights. Recent Parent Cafés were conducted as a series of three sessions:

- Parent Café 1 – Taking Care of Yourself
- Parent Café 2 – Being a Strong Parent
- Parent Café 3 – Building a Strong Relationship with Your Children

SFI reports that more than 87 percent of Parent Café participants have reported learning something about each of the Protective Factors and intend to change their behavior based on that information.⁶ Parent Cafés are frequently a parent's first formal contact with SFI. Parents may choose to participate in one or more Parent Cafés, pursue training to serve as a Parent Café Host, engage as a SFI Active Parent Leader or become a part of the SFI Core Parent Leadership. SFI also invites parents to be a part of the Keep Your Family Strong online Facebook community.

Ongoing work in this area is reflected in the SFI 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. Goal 3 states, "Promote Parent Leadership in Family-Serving Systems." Program level outcomes related to this goal include:

1. 1,000 parent leaders in regional networks are trained to deliver SFI LINE Parent Cafés and parent leadership training; and
2. Providers are fostering parent leadership intentionally.

4. Family Advocacy Centers

In 2004, IDCFS established the first Family Advocacy Center (FAC) in Bloomington, Illinois. The purpose of this FAC is to provide advocacy and support to parents outside of the formal child welfare system. IDCFS recognized that community-based organizations are well

positioned to reach families before they come into the child welfare system and are often better able to establish trusting relationships with families involved in the system.

Today, there are 15 FACs operating throughout the state. FACs are located in areas with the highest IDCFS intake rates and are operated by a variety of community and/or faith-based organizations. The following chart is an example of an organization serving as a FAC.

Family Advocacy in Champaign County	
<p style="text-align: center;">Mission Statement</p> <p>To empower families through advocacy to understand their role and responsibilities in the child welfare system. To engage families in active participation in service interventions so families can obtain the necessary skills to build stronger families.</p> <p>To provide families with assistance on how to navigate through the child welfare system and empower them to become the driving force in their case.</p> <p>It is our belief with this power shift, families will be respected as the change agent on their case and ultimately the change agent in their lives.</p>	
Services provided by Family Advocacy in Champaign County include:	
Child Welfare Advocacy	Professional Mentoring
Mediation	Workshops
Community Outreach	Education Equity
Health Promotion	Strategic Planning

E. IDCFS and SFI

IDCFS and SFI share a commitment to the Strengthening Families approach. IDCFS has worked diligently to embed the Protective Factors into its system. SFI has focused its efforts on embedding the Strengthening Families approach in the early childhood sector and engaging parents in this process. The success of this collaboration appears related to the participants' efforts to keep the focus on protecting children by strengthening and supporting families.

IDCFS has continued to refine its practice model to include Trauma-Informed, Strengths-Based, Family-Centered Practice. The Strengthening Families approach and promotion of the Protective Factors has contributed to and supported this evolution.

F. Implementing SF in Los Angeles County

IDCFS and Strengthening Families Illinois have made substantial progress in integrating the Strengthening Families approach and the Protective Factors into their work with children and families. Clearly some aspects of SFI could – with sufficient will – be replicated wholesale in Los Angeles County. Other aspects will require modifications to reflect our geography, population, political realities and provider communities. The most important lesson that SFI offers is - that with hard work and strong leadership – change is possible.

Recommendations for Consideration by Your Board:

▪ ***Integrating the Strengthening Families Approach into Our Work***

1. Direct the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable) and the Chief Executive Office to serve as the contact point for County efforts to integrate Strengthening Families into their work with children, families and communities.
2. Instruct the County departments represented on the Roundtable to integrate Strengthening Families into their work with children and families, within existing resources, and to report their progress to the Roundtable for inclusion in the regularly scheduled Roundtable reports to the Board.

The following departments are represented on the Roundtable:

- Chief Executive Office
 - Children and Family Services
 - Mental Health
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Public Health
 - Public Social Services
 - Probation
3. Charge the Roundtable and CEO to work collaboratively with other established or emerging Strengthening Families efforts within the County including the Education Coordinating Council (ECC), LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment, Magnolia Place and First 5 LA.

▪ ***Communicating the Strengthening Families Message***

4. Direct Roundtable members to work collaboratively with the CEO Public Affairs and Multimedia, Cable and Telecommunications Offices, and where possible, philanthropic organizations to:
 - Craft consistent Strengthening Families messages for use across departments, and
 - Explore how social media and innovative technologies can assist County departments in communicating with client families.

▪ ***Changing Practice***

5. Encourage County departments working with children and families who are living in poverty, exposed to mental health issues, and/or under the child welfare system to mitigate these risk factors by promoting participation in high quality early education programs.
 - a. Direct the Roundtable, ECC, DCFS and representatives of the early education community to develop a plan to target the enrollment of at least 90 percent of young DCFS children under the age of six—and the children of DCFS and probation youth—in high-quality, subsidized early care and education programs where space is available by the close of 2014. This plan will necessarily include

strategies to maximize the use of subsidized child development services available in the County.

- b. Request the ECC to support DCFS efforts to enroll young children under their supervision in high quality early learning programs by:
 - i. Working with DCFS to modify caregiver agreements, where possible, to include a requirement to enroll children in high quality early education programs.
 - ii. Working with the Dependency Court to encourage that Court Minute Orders related to children between three and five years of age include enrollment in high quality early education programs.
- c. Instruct the Roundtable to convene representatives of DCFS, ECC, early childhood programs, Los Angeles County Office of Education, Zero to Three, WestEd, and the Children's Court to develop policy recommendations to guide the use of early education services for children birth to three years of age. These recommendations will be included in the July 2012 Roundtable report to the Board of Supervisors.
- d. Direct DPSS to ensure that families receiving CalWORKs Stage 1 Child Care are informed of the importance of early education and the full range of child development programs.
- e. Direct DPSS, the Roundtable and the local child care resource and referral agencies to develop strategies to inform families exempted from CalWORKs work requirements because of the age or number of young children in the family, of the subsidized child development programs for which their children may be eligible.

¹ Erwin McEwen, "Strengthening Families Leadership Summit-Los Angeles," November 10, 2010.

² Op. cit., McEwen, November 10, 2010.

³ Children's Bureau discussion of its child abuse prevention initiatives at <http://www.all4kids.org/prevention.html>.

⁴ About Strengthening Families, is available at <http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net/index.php/about>.

⁵ Information on the World Café and the Café process is available at <http://www.theworldcafe.com>.

⁶ Illinois: State Approach Profile, Center for the Study of Social Policy at www.strengtheningfamilies.net.



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

July 18, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. T. Fujioka", is written over the printed name and title.

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

STATUS REPORT ON THE CHILD CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

On March 29, 2011, your Board adopted the updated Child Care Policy Framework and a series of related recommendations. As a part of that action, the Office of Child Care within the Service Integration Branch of the Chief Executive Office (CEO) was directed to provide status reports in July and January of each year through 2013. This is the first status report covering the period of March 29, 2011 through June 30, 2011.

Report on the Illinois Approach to Strengthening Families

The Office of Child Care was directed to analyze the Strengthening Families implementation plan developed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and to report back to your Board with recommendations on how the child welfare and child development sectors in Los Angeles County could be more effectively integrated. That report was forwarded to your Board on July 12, 2011, and included five recommendations for your consideration.

Add County Department Representatives to the Policy Roundtable for Child Care

On May 31, 2011, your Board approved County Counsel's revision to the Policy Roundtable for Child Care's ordinance, adding representatives from the Departments of Mental Health, Public Health and Probation as members to the Roundtable. The ordinance had a second reading on June 7, 2011, and became effective on July 7, 2011.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

***Please Conserve Paper – This Document and Copies are Two-Sided
Intra-County Correspondence Sent Electronically Only***

The new department representatives will be participating in the Roundtable's annual retreat scheduled for July 13, 2011. Taking advantage of this once a year, full day meeting, Roundtable members will be assessing strategies for integrating the Strengthening Families approach into their work.

Policy Framework Goal 1 - Expansion of the Steps to Excellence Project

In November 2010, the First 5 LA Commission approved funding for the Early Childhood Workforce Consortium. This Consortium is an innovative mix of seven projects addressing community-based training related to child development, two- and four-year college degree programs in child development, college tuition assistance and the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP). Consortium participants were instructed to plan for a February 2011 start-up. Unfortunately, as a result of the threat to reserve funds of local First 5 Commissions, the Early Childhood Workforce Consortium has been put on hold. When this funding becomes available, we will proceed with the expansion of STEP.

Policy Framework Goal 2 - Efforts to Strengthen the Child Development Infrastructure

The Office of Child Care, in conjunction with staff of CEO Intergovernmental Affairs and a number of local child development and advocacy organizations, monitored the various budget proposals, developed impact statements related to those proposals and recommended positions on budget proposals and legislation. The following is a very brief synopsis of final budget actions impacting subsidized child development services:

- Funding was eliminated for Centralized Eligibility List projects throughout the State.
- Funding for the California Department of Education subsidized child development services was reduced by 11 percent across the board.
- Maximum earnings for families seeking subsidized child care services were reduced from 75 percent of the State Median Income (SMI) to 70 percent of SMI.
- Reimbursement rates for license exempt providers were reduced from 80 percent of the rate paid to licensed family child care providers to 60 percent.

While these reductions are significant, other more draconian cuts were avoided. This enacted budget is however, predicated upon the State's receipt of an additional \$4 billion in revenue. Should that revenue not materialize, child development programs statewide will face an additional \$23 million in across-the-board cuts.

Based on recent history, the adoption of an on-time State budget is still more of an anomaly than an expectation. Therefore, efforts continue to establish a local “bridge fund” for child development programs in the event of a delay in State funding. We hope to be able to identify actual funders for a bridge fund pilot project in our next report to your Board.

We are also pleased to report that on June 23, 2011, the Los Angeles Unified School District Board unanimously approved a \$10.4 million allocation to support the construction of a new early education center in the Bell/Cudahy area. As planned, this state-of-the-art early education center will be licensed to serve 175 children from birth to five years of age in seven classrooms and will include space for family engagement and professional development activities. The children will also have access to an exciting and innovative playground. Currently, construction is targeted to begin in 2013. This facility could become the first Educare site in Los Angeles County – mobilizing a variety of community and philanthropic resources to provide comprehensive and high quality services to low-income families.

Conclusion

State budget issues have consumed the attention of child development operators, County departments, and community stakeholders during the past quarter. Now that there is some clarity regarding funding levels, we are confident that attention will return to programmatic issues. The January 2012 status report will address progress on Goals 3 – 5. Should your staff have questions regarding this report, they can contact Kathy House, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, at (213) 974-4530.

WTF:KH:LB
KMS



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

222 South Hill Street, Fifth Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (213) 974-4103 • Fax: (213) 217-5106 • www.childcare.lacounty.gov

September 14, 2011

To: Executive Officer

From: Kathleen Malaske-Samu *KMS*
Policy Roundtable for Child Care

Response to Board Action

The attached report is in response to a Board action on March 29, 2011, agenda item 12. Copies are being distributed to the Board Offices. If there are any questions or concerns I can be reached at 213/974-2440.

Thank you.

KMS:k

Attachment

Nora Armenta
Maria Calix
Nancy Carter
Duane C. Dennis
Bobbie Edwards

Ann E. Franzen
Michael Gray
Carollee Howes, Ph.D.
Dora Jacildo
Charlotte Lee



Kathleen Malaske-Samu
Jacquelyn McCroskey, D.S.W.
Stacy Miller
Terri Chew Nishimura, MA, OTR/L
Arlene Rhine

Connie Russell
Adam Sonenshein
Esther A. Torrez
Mika Yamamoto
Ruth M. Yoon
Sarah Younglove



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

222 South Hill Street, Fifth Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (213) 974-4103 • Fax: (213) 217-5106 • www.childcare.lacounty.gov

September 14, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Jacquelyn McCroskey, DSW *J. McCroskey*
Policy Roundtable for Child Care, Chair

CONNECTING COUNTY CLIENTS WITH CHILDREN TO CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

On March 29, 2011, your Board adopted the Child Care Policy Framework and a related recommendation directing the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable) "To assess the feasibility of implementing a countywide system to track vacancies in subsidized child development programs for the purpose of facilitating access to these services by vulnerable families known to County departments." This report is the first response to that directive and focuses on activities currently underway in the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation.

Potential Benefits of High Quality Child Development Services

There is a growing understanding among County Departments that families seeking County services could also benefit from access to high quality and affordable child development services. These services keep children safe, promote optimal development and school readiness; provide social connections for children and their families; and make it possible for parents to pursue employment, training, and/or counseling. Attachment A is a summary of key research on the benefits of high quality child development services.

Subsidized child development program operators would also benefit from improved communication with County departments and their clients who are eligible for subsidized child development services. California Department of Education (CDE) contracts for subsidized child development services are structured so that vacancies can result in programs "under-earning" their contracts. Historically, local CDE contractors have returned substantial amounts of subsidy dollars to CDE on an annual basis, despite the fact that thousands of eligible young children were waiting for services. While CDE recently implemented procedures to allow funds to be moved among similar program types, the adoption of the 2011-2012 State Budget has created new challenges. Child development programs are absorbing across the board cuts of 11 percent, implementing new eligibility criteria which terminate services to families at lower incomes, and responding to the elimination of centralized eligibility lists.

Nora Armenta
Maria Calix
Nancy Carter
Duane C. Dennis
Bobbie Edwards

Ann E. Franzen
Michael Gray
Carollee Howes, Ph.D.
Dora Jacildo
Charlotte Lee



Kathleen Malaske-Samu
Jacquelyn McCroskey, D.S.W.
Stacy Miller
Terri Chew Nishimura, MA, OTR/L
Arlene Rhine

Connie Russell
Adam Sonenshein
Esther A. Torrez
Mika Yamamoto
Ruth M. Yoon
Sarah Younglove

Access to Subsidized Child Development Services

Prior to July 1, 2011, the Office of Child Care operated the Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List (LACEL) for Los Angeles County with funding from the CDE. The LACEL allowed families to submit one application for subsidized child care services for all their children. All local CDE-funded child development programs were required to fill vacancies by drawing names from the LACEL.

Between July 2007 and June 2011, the LACEL database averaged 35,000 children in need of subsidized child development services. While not a perfect system, the LACEL afforded families and related service providers a one stop connection to the subsidized child care system.

Unfortunately, CEL projects fell victim to the State budget crisis and funding was eliminated as of July 1, 2011. Now families in need of subsidized child development services have to approach each individual subsidized child development program to learn if there is a space available and each CDE-funded program is required to maintain a list of eligible families. This clearly complicates a family's search for subsidized care, as well as the support that related service providers are prepared to offer.

Families in need of subsidized care benefit when they are able to locate and enroll their children in a high quality subsidized program in a timely manner. Similarly, CDE-funded programs benefit when they are able to fill their vacancies quickly and earn their full CDE contract. The interests of both families and programs are served when eligible families are connected with programs that have the capacity to serve their children. The challenge is matching a family's specific needs to appropriate programs that have openings.

Re-thinking How to Connect Families to Child Development Services

The LACEL provided County departments with a streamlined mechanism to connect client families to the subsidized child development sector and provided critically important information on the children and families who were unable to access services. The LACEL was less successful in fulfilling the goals of parents who wanted **immediate access** to subsidized child development programs.

Given the lessons learned while administering the LACEL, the Roundtable for Child Care is researching systemic approaches to assist County departments in connecting eligible client families to child development services. It is the Roundtable's intent to consider how new technologies can mitigate the complexities inherent in this assignment.

Innovative Use of Technology – Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

Approximately two years ago, DCFS initiated a series of "Head Start enrollment drives" for foster children in selected regional offices. Working closely with Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) - Head Start program staff, DCFS succeeded in enrolling 200 foster children into Head Start programs. While successful, these enrollment drives were extremely staff intensive and were not practically sustainable over time.

The lessons learned, however, informed the basic architecture of a DCFS developed electronic referral system. This system identifies all foster children between three and five years of age who are categorically eligible for Head Start, and based on DCFS records, are not already enrolled in a child development program. Each Children's Social Worker (CSW) is able to log in and locate a listing of the children on their caseload who are categorically eligible for Head Start. Once the CSW receives consent from the caregiver of the child, the CSW can click on the child status and easily refer them to Head Start through the LACOE Head Start Program. The referral is forwarded to the appropriate Head Start provider and that provider contacts the family for enrollment. While the system is still under development, it has the potential to make it more efficient to connect with other child development providers in Los Angeles County.

This system was launched in May, 2011 to take advantage of the typical Head Start enrollment period and has successfully referred over 1,100 foster children to Head Start programs.

Probation Department

The Probation Department has identified various client groups with potential child development needs:

- Children of pregnant and parenting juvenile probationers, in placement or supervised at home. (Since teens are no longer a specialized caseload, teens may be supervised by any of 300 Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs),
- Younger siblings of juvenile probationers, and
- Young children of adult probationers.

DCFS clients with open cases have "priority" for enrollment in both CDE and Head Start child development programs. As such, DCFS clients move to the "front of the line" and are not required to meet income criteria at the time of enrollment. By contrast, Probation clients will need to demonstrate that they are income eligible for these services. Families seeking full time care so parents can maintain employment or attend school/training will face significant competition for limited spaces, whereas part-day enrichment or school readiness programs for children between three and five years of age may be slightly more accessible. The Roundtable, in conjunction with child development stakeholders, will explore various approaches to sharing child development resource information with the Probation Department.

The child development needs of pregnant and parenting juvenile probationers – both male and female - are of particular concern to the Probation Department, the Roundtable, the Commission for Children and Families and the Education Coordinating Council. We know that brain development during the first three years has lifelong impacts. We also know that parent-child relationships play a critical role in that process, that human potential is lost when very young children are subjected to trauma and/or neglect, and remediation is both costly and less effective than "getting it right from the beginning."

Efforts are currently underway to identify these young parents for the purpose of introducing them to child development services. In addition, there is interest in exploring how/if teen parents under the jurisdiction of the Probation Department and DCFS could be afforded priority access to CDE subsidized child care services.

Next Steps

The Roundtable applauds DCFS and LACOE Head Start for their successful electronic application. We will continue to support County departments in their efforts to access child development services for their clients, and the use of innovative technologies to streamline this process. Over the next several months, the Roundtable will focus on the following activities:

1. Explore how the DCFS-Head Start electronic application could be expanded to include additional types of child development programs.
2. Facilitate communication between child development stakeholders and County departments for the purpose of increasing access to subsidized child development services among families receiving County services.
3. Research opportunities to provide teen parents under the jurisdiction of DCFS and/or Probation priority access to subsidized child development services.

The January 2012 report on implementation of the Child Care Policy Framework will include an update on these items.

JM:KMS
LE:cc

Attachment

- c: Chief Executive Office
Department of Children and Family Services
Probation Department

The Heckman Equation



Invest in early childhood development: Reduce deficits, strengthen the economy.

James J. Heckman is the Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at The University of Chicago, a Nobel Laureate in Economics and an expert in the economics of human development.

Those seeking to reduce deficits and strengthen the economy should make significant investments in early childhood education.

Professor Heckman's groundbreaking work with a consortium of economists, psychologists, statisticians and neuroscientists shows that early childhood development directly influences economic, health and social outcomes for individuals and society. Adverse early environments create deficits in skills and abilities that drive down productivity and increase social costs—thereby adding to financial deficits borne by the public.

Early childhood development drives success in school and life.

A critical time to shape productivity is from birth to age 5, when the brain develops rapidly to build the foundation of cognitive and character skills necessary for success in school, health, career and life. Early childhood education fosters cognitive skills along with attentiveness, motivation, self-control and sociability—the character skills that turn knowledge into know-how and people into productive citizens.

Investing in early childhood education for at-risk children is an effective strategy for reducing social costs.

Every child needs effective early childhood supports—at-risk children from disadvantaged environments are least likely to get them. They come from families who lack the education, social and economic resources to provide the early developmental stimulation that is so helpful for success in school, college, career and life. Poor health, dropout rates, poverty, and crime—Illinois can address these problems and substantially reduce their costs to taxpayers by investing in developmental opportunities for at-risk children.

Investing in early childhood education is a cost-effective strategy for promoting economic growth.

Our economic future depends on providing the tools for upward mobility and building a highly educated, skilled workforce. Early childhood education is the most efficient way to accomplish these goals:

- Professor Heckman's analysis of the Perry Preschool program shows a 7% to 10% per year return on investment based on increased school and career achievement as well as reduced costs in remedial education, health and criminal justice system expenditures.
- It is very likely that many other early childhood programs are equally effective. Closer to home, analysts of the Chicago Child Parent Center Study estimated \$48,000 in benefits to the public per child from a half-day public school preschool for at-risk children. Participants at age 20 were estimated to be more likely to have finished high school—and were less likely to have been held back, need remedial help, or to have been arrested. The estimated return on investment was \$7 for every dollar invested.¹
- Investing in early childhood education to increase high school graduation rates would boost Illinois' economy. For example, a five percent increase in male high school graduation rates is estimated to save \$379 million in incarceration costs and crime-related expenditures. It is estimated that high school graduates bring in \$400,000 more in lifetime earnings than a high school dropout.² Illinois households would have \$2.8 billion more in accumulated wealth if all members of households had graduated from high school.

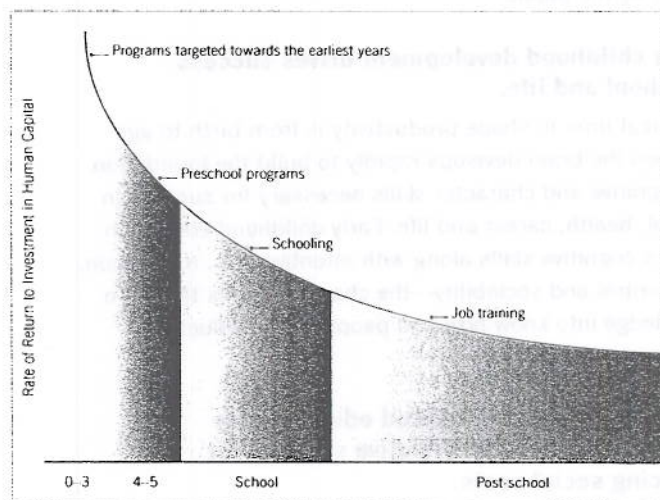
The Heckman Equation

Make greater investments in young children to see greater returns in education, health and productivity.

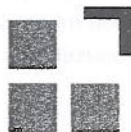
Keep these principles in mind to make efficient and effective public investments that reduce deficits and strengthen the economy:

- **Investing in early childhood education is a cost-effective strategy—even during a budget crisis.** Deficit reduction will only come from wiser investment of public and private dollars. Data show that one of the most effective strategies for economic growth is investing in the developmental growth of at-risk young children. Short-term costs are more than offset by the immediate and long-term benefits through reduction in the need for special education and remediation, better health outcomes, reduced need for social services, lower criminal justice costs and increased self-sufficiency and productivity among families.
- **Prioritize investment in quality early childhood education for at-risk children.** All families are under increasing strain; disadvantaged families are strained to the limit. They have fewer resources to invest in effective early development. Without resources such as “parent-coaching” and early childhood education programs, many at-risk children miss the developmental growth that is the foundation for success. They will suffer for the rest of their lives—and all of us will pay the price in higher social costs and declining economic fortunes.
- **Develop cognitive AND character skills early. Invest in the “whole child”.** Effective early childhood education packages cognitive skills with character skills such as attentiveness, impulse control, persistence and teamwork. Together, cognition and character drive education, career and life success—with character development often being the most important factor.

- **Provide developmental resources to children AND their families.** Direct investment in the child’s early development is complemented by investment in parents and in family environments. Quality early childhood education from birth to age 5, coupled with parent-coaching, such as home visitation programs for parents and teen mothers, has proven to be effective and warrant more investment.
- **Invest, develop, and sustain to produce gain.** Invest in developmental resources for at-risk children. Develop their cognitive and character skills from birth to age 5, when it matters most. Sustain gains in early development with effective education through to adulthood. Gain more capable, productive and valuable citizens who pay dividends to Illinois for generations to come.



Early childhood education is an efficient and effective investment for economic and workforce development. The earlier the investment, the greater the return on investment.



Heckman

The economics of human potential.

www.heckmanequation.org

The Heckman Equation is supported by the Irving Harris Foundation; The Children's Initiative: A Project of the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation; the McCormick Foundation; and an anonymous funder.



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

February 10, 2012

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. T. Fujioka", is written over the printed name and title.

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

STATUS REPORT ON THE CHILD CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

On March 29, 2011, your Board adopted the updated Child Care Policy Framework and a series of related recommendations. As a part of that action, the Office of Child Care within the Service Integration Branch of the Chief Executive Office was directed to provide status reports in July and January of each year through 2013. This is the second status report covering the period of July 1, 2011 through January 31, 2012, and is focused on work related to three of the Policy Framework Goals.

Goal 1 - Expansion of the Steps to Excellence Program (STEP)

On December 6, 2011, your Board adopted a contract with Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) to provide funding for the Steps to Excellence Program (STEP) through August 2016. STEP is a child care quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) developed by the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and administered by the Office of Child Care. STEP has been operating in eleven communities across the County. Currently, 420 programs are participating in STEP including 205 child development centers and 215 family child care homes. The *STEP Rating Guide*, which reports program rating results, is available in English and Spanish online at www.childcare.lacounty.gov and in hard copy. In addition, the results of the STEP process evaluation, conducted in 2011, are also posted on the website. This evaluation was particularly timely and the recommendations presented will inform the STEP expansion efforts.

Under the LAUP contract, STEP is committed to:

- Expanding its services into five new communities each year. By September 2016, STEP will be in operating in 36 communities within Los Angeles County.
- Developing a recertification process for STEP-rated programs. This process will promote "quality improvement" as an ongoing process and will ensure that parents have access to current information regarding the quality of child development programs participating in STEP.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

**Please Conserve Paper – This Document and Copies are Two-Sided
Intra-County Correspondence Sent Electronically Only**

- Continuing to provide Quality Improvement Grants to STEP participants. These relatively small grants help programs meet STEP standards.
- Evaluating STEP processes to inform STEP and the child development community about the most effective strategies to improve the quality of child development services.

On December 16, 2011, we were pleased to learn that California was one of nine states to be awarded funding under the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge Grant, a competitive grant program administered jointly by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. From the Federal perspective, the purpose of this funding is to build statewide systems of high quality early learning and development programs by aligning and raising standards for existing early learning and development programs, improving training and support for the early learning workforce through evidence-based practices, and building robust evaluation systems that promote effective practices and programs to help parents make informed decisions.

California's application proposed a regional, rather than a statewide system. This approach was put forth in order to comply with Governor Brown's directive to avoid creating a system that would result in future cost pressures on the State. Therefore, the California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) will be targeting the Early Learning Challenge Grant funds to 15 counties where local QRISs are in place or being developed. Los Angeles County is particularly fortunate in that both STEP and LAUP will be participating in this effort.

Going forward this quarter, we will be working with your offices as we identify expansion communities and as details emerge regarding the Early Learning Challenge Grant.

Goal 2 - Efforts to Strengthen the Child Development Infrastructure

Unfortunately, the Governor's State Budget proposal for 2012-13 will present significant challenges to any attempt to "strengthen the child development infrastructure." A detailed discussion of the proposed reductions to the child development sector is attached for your information. The following provides a brief description of reductions which the Governor has put forth for 2012-13.

- Impose Federal Work Requirements on all families receiving subsidized child development services for an estimated statewide savings of \$293.6 million. Families currently receiving subsidized child development services where the parents are enrolled in college courses or vocational training, seeking permanent housing, and/or employment or incapacitated would no longer be eligible for services.
- Reduce the income eligibility ceiling from 70 percent of the State Median Income (\$3,518 per month for a family of three) to 200 percent of federal poverty level (\$3,088 for a family of three). This action is projected to generate a statewide savings of \$68 million. It could also force a single parent with two children earning \$3,089 per month to absorb child care costs of \$1,000 per a month.

- Eliminate the cost of living adjustment for child development programs for a savings of \$41.6 million. It should be noted that child development programs have not received a cost of living adjustment for over four years and have absorbed reductions each year for the past three years.
- Reduce the reimbursement ceiling for voucher based programs for a savings of \$11.8 million. In Los Angeles County, this drops the reimbursement ceiling by \$80 to \$118 per month, depending on the age of the child and type of child development program. These reductions combined with the required recordkeeping, will make child care providers less willing to serve children in voucher programs.
- Reduce the reimbursement rate for CDE/CDD contracted centers by 10 percent. The current rate for programs providing full day child development services is \$34.38 per child per day. The Governor's proposal will drop the reimbursement rate to \$30.94 per child per day. The consequence of this seemingly small cut becomes apparent when calculated at the classroom level of 20 children - effectively eliminating \$16,512 per classroom per year. This reduction will net statewide savings of \$101.9 million.
- CalWORKs Stage 2 child care services are slated to be reduced by \$26.3 million due to lower caseloads and Stage 3 is to be increased by \$4.5 million. In addition, the Governor is proposing to combine Stage 1, 2, and 3 into a single program.

Based on our initial calculations, if the Governor's budget is implemented as presented, the reductions would result in:

- A loss of \$155 million in child development funding to Los Angeles County; and
- More than 27,000 children in low-income working families would lose their child development services.

In addition to those dramatic reductions, the Governor has also proposed to move the bulk of child development services from CDE to County welfare agencies beginning in 2013-14. This transfer would represent a significant workload issue for counties. In addition, the child development services administered by County welfare departments have historically been viewed primarily as a "work support" activity. The quality of these services and their potential to prepare children for success in school and beyond has not been a priority. However, neuroscience has demonstrated that the architecture of the brain is shaped during the first three years of life, and that children's experiences before entering the K-12 system have lifelong impacts on academic, social, emotional, and health outcomes. In addition, there is a growing body of research documenting that poor children can reap significant benefits from participating in high quality child development programs. Therefore, the Governor's proposal will need to be weighed carefully, considering both the immediate need to reduce State expenditures, and our responsibility to help families support the healthy development of their children.

Goal 5 – Establish a Los Angeles County Strengthening Families Learning Community

The Chief Executive Office launched the Los Angeles County Strengthening Families Learning Community on January 26, 2012. The Departments of Children and Family Services, Mental Health, Parks and Recreation, Probation, Public Library, Public Health, and Public Social Services participated in this event. With support from Casey Family Programs, Frank Farrow and Judy Langford with the Center for the Study of Social Policy based in Washington D.C., were able attend and present on the Strengthening Families Approach.

The Strengthening Families Approach builds on family strengths, buffers risk and promotes better outcomes for children. Initiated as a child abuse prevention strategy, Strengthening Families has been shown to benefit all families and has been effectively incorporated into the operations of public libraries, domestic violence prevention programs, and mental health and child welfare agencies. The adaptability of this approach to various sectors and the common language it offers has facilitated the integration of services among government departments and in communities. Currently, 35 states are implementing the Strengthening Families Approach as are various offices within the Federal Administration for Children, Youth and Families, including the Office of Head Start, the Office of Child Care, and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. The Department of Defense is also using Strengthening Families in its New Parents and Family Advocacy Programs.

County department representatives expressed strong interest in staff development/training opportunities related to Strengthening Families and how it complements efforts such as the core practice model already underway to better integrate services and improve the well being of children and families. We will keep your Board apprised of our work in this arena.

Conclusion

We are pleased that, despite this tough economic climate, we are able to report on the expansion of STEP into additional communities. We are confident that the Strengthening Families Learning Community will provide additional opportunities and a common language to support the integration of services across County departments and with our community partners. The increased level of collaboration will be key as we deal with the State budget impacts.

The Policy Framework has contributed to our ability to take advantage of funding opportunities and to work cooperatively with stakeholders during this time of fiscal challenges. Our next report will include updates on Goals 3 and 4. Should your staff have questions regarding this report or the Child Care Policy Framework, please contact Trish Ploehn at (213) 974-4532 or tploehn@ceo.lacounty.gov.

WTF:TP
LB:KMS:km

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel



County of Los Angeles
Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Child Care Planning Committee

IN

Policy Brief

Revised: February 1, 2012

Governor's FY 2012-13 Proposed Budget
Preliminary Impacts of Proposed Cuts to Child Care and Development and Administrative Restructuring - Los Angeles County

The Governor's State Budget proposal for 2012-13 released on January 5, 2012 would reduce funding for and restructure the administration of child care and development services. Total proposed funding for child care and development services, excluding after school programs, for 2012-13 is \$1.5 billion, reflecting a reduction of \$516.9 million in all child care and development programs, including part-day State Preschool. In addition, the proposed budget shifts all child care and development programs, except State Preschool, to the County welfare departments effective 2013-14 as a voucher-based program.¹

Governor's Proposal	State Savings	State Impact	Los Angeles County Impact
Require families to meet federal welfare-to-work requirements, generally 30 hours per week (20 hours per week for families with children under six years old). Families seeking employment, enrolled in school or a vocational training program, seeking permanent housing for family stability, or incapacitated would no longer be eligible for full-day subsidized child care and development services.	non-Proposition 98 General Fund \$293.6 million	46,300 (spaces lost)	Funding no longer available to programs serving children and families in Los Angeles County: \$155 million
Part-day State Preschool exempt from requirement.			Of this amount, estimated reduction to: Voucher-based programs = \$76 million Loss of services: 15,135 children/10,000 low-income working families Part-day State Preschool = \$20.9 million Loss of services: 5,490 preschoolers (3-4 years old)
Reduce income eligibility ceiling from 70 percent of State Median Income (SMI) to 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). ²	non-Proposition 98 General Fund \$43.9 million Proposition 98 General Fund \$24.1 million	15,700 (spaces lost for children currently in care)	
Eliminate cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).	non-Proposition 98 General Fund \$29.9 million Proposition 98 General Fund \$11.7 million	No COLA for programs since the 2007-08 budget No growth for programs since the 2008-09 budget	
Reduce reimbursement ceiling for voucher-based programs from 85 th percentile of the private pay market based on 2005 Regional Market Rate (RMR) survey data to the 50 th percentile based on the 2009 survey.	non-Proposition 98 General Fund \$11.8 million		Full-day child development centers = \$57.6 million 6,840 children (birth to 12 years old)

Governor's Proposal	State Savings	State Impact	Los Angeles County Impact
Reduce the Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR) for California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD)-contracted centers by 10 percent.	non-Proposition 98 General Fund \$67.8 million	\$34.38 per child day of enrollment reduced to \$30.94 (full-day)	
	Proposition 98 General Fund \$34.1 million	\$21.22 daily rate to \$19.09 (part-day State Preschool)	
Related Programs			
Eliminate the supplemental reimbursement for free and reduced priced breakfast and lunch served at private schools and private child care centers.	non-Proposition 98 General Fund \$10.4 million		
Eliminate the requirement that schools provide transitional kindergarten instruction beginning in the 2012-13 academic year.	Proposition 98 General Fund \$223.7 million	125,000 children by year 3	
Administrative Restructuring of Child Care and Development Services – Effective 2012-13			
Shift eligibility and payment functions from Alternative Payment (AP) Programs and CDE/CDD-contracted centers to county welfare departments, though counties may contract with these agencies to perform the payment function. All eligible families, including families currently enrolled in CDE/CDD-contracted centers, would receive a voucher for payment to a provider of their choosing. Recipients of child protective services or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation and cash-aided families would receive priority for the voucher-based program. CDE/CDD would continue to administer the part-day State Preschool program.		Children birth to 12 years old 130,733	440 centers operated by school districts, community-based organizations, faith-based entities and others contracted by CDE/CDD to provide full-day, full year services to 56,000 children of low-income families with a demonstrated need (working, seeking employment, enrolled in school or a vocational training program, seeking housing for family stability, or incarcerated) ⁴ Workforce Impact 2,700 classroom teachers 137 support staff 115 management positions Voucher-based programs: 200-275 Enrollment, case management and management positions
Require counties and AP Programs to identify and collect overpayments. Sanctions would be imposed on agencies that do not reduce the incidence of overpayments and to providers and families who commit intentional program violations. Savings would be reinvested into child care slots.			

¹ Brown, Jr., E.G. *Governor's Budget Summary 2012-13*. State of California, January 10, 2012.

² According to the Budget Summary, 200 percent of FPL is equivalent to 61 percent of the SMI for a family size of three, reflecting a reduction in the income ceiling from \$42,216 to \$37,060. For illustrative purposes, Table 1 compares 200 percent of the FPL with 70 percent of the SMI.

Table 1. Comparison of 200 Percent of Federal Poverty Level with 70 Percent of the State Median Income					
Family Size	2011 Federal Poverty Level ¹		State Median Income ²		
	200% Gross Monthly Income	200% Gross Yearly Income	70% Gross Monthly Income	70% Gross Yearly Income	
	\$1,815	\$21,780	\$3,283	\$39,396	
	\$2,452	\$29,420	\$3,518	\$42,216	
	\$3,088	\$37,060	\$3,908	\$46,896	
	\$3,725	\$44,700	\$4,534	\$54,408	
	\$4,362	\$52,340	\$5,159	\$61,908	
	\$4,998	\$59,980	\$5,276	\$63,312	
	\$5,635	\$67,620	\$5,394	\$64,728	
	\$6,272	\$75,260			
	\$636	\$7,640			

* Federal Register, Vol. 76, No. 13, January 20, 2011, pp. 3637-3638.

* California Department of Education, *Management Bulletin 11-06 – Updated Child Development Income Ceilings*, April 2011. Retrieved from www.cde.ca.gov/si/inf/cd/mb1106.asp.

³ Data from this section extracted from the survey of agencies providing subsidized child care and development services in center-based programs conducted by the Los Angeles County Data Collaboration in 2001 and the CDE 801 report for the previous year obtained in April 2011.

⁴ Table 2 details the potential impact of the Governor's proposal to children and families served by centers that meet quality standards as set forth by Title V of the California Education Code.

Table 2. CDE/CDD-contracted Child Development Centers – Full-day		
Program Type – Full-day, Full-year	Number of Children Served	
California State Preschool Program – Full-day (three and four year olds)	19,957	
Child Care and Development Centers (birth to three year olds)	3,750	
Child Care and Development Centers (five to 12 year olds)	4,060	



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

July 20, 2012

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

THIRD STATUS REPORT ON THE CHILD CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

On March 29, 2011, the Board adopted the updated Child Care Policy Framework and a series of related recommendations. As a part of that action, the Office of Child Care, within the Service Integration Branch of the Chief Executive Office (CEO), was directed to provide status reports in July and January of each year through 2013. This is the third status report on the implementation of the Child Care Policy Framework, covering the period of February 1 through June 30, 2012.

Goal 1. The quality of child development services in Los Angeles County will be improved as the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP) is expanded and support services to STEP participants are intensified.

STEP is a child care quality rating and support system developed by the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), and administered by the Office of Child Care. The pilot phase of STEP was funded primarily by First 5 LA from August 2008 through November 2011.

The second phase of STEP is supported by funding from Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP). Since the Board's adoption of the LAUP contract in December 2011, STEP has succeeded in reconnecting with programs that had expressed interest in STEP and recruiting new participants. Between April and July 2012, STEP observations were conducted in 49 child development programs, including 11 child development centers and 38 family child care homes. Also during this period, 27 programs attended STEP orientation sessions, learning about the benefits and expectations for STEP participants. Currently, 425 programs are enrolled in STEP.

The Office of Child Care has also been working intensely with the California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE), to plan for the implementation of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. CDE was awarded \$52.6 million in December 2011 and these funds will support 17 local quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) throughout

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

**Please Conserve Paper – This Document and Copies are Two-Sided
Intra-County Correspondence Sent Electronically Only**

California. In Los Angeles County, STEP and LAUP will each receive \$5,149,500 over four years. While STEP and LAUP will operate their Race to the Top projects separately, they will use a common child care rating matrix. Quarterly meetings will be conducted to address issues, avoid duplication, and maximize the impact of this time-limited resource. Both organizations submitted their Work Plans on May 25, 2012.

Also on May 25, 2012, the Office of Child Care received an "intent to fund" communication from CDE stating that funds could not be released until the state budget was signed and that the planning allocation for the period of January 1 through December 31, 2012, would be combined with the first year implementation funding amount. The term of the implementation funds is July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. A formal request to accept these funds will be submitted for your consideration when the documents are received.

Goal 2. Local, State, and Federal policies and budgets will strengthen the child development infrastructure and support the expansion of high quality child development services that integrate family support, health, mental health, and other relevant services into their operations.

Given California's ongoing budget situation, efforts during this period were focused more on "preserving" than "expanding" high quality child development services. The Roundtable worked collaboratively with the CEO's Intergovernmental and External Affairs, the Child Care Planning Committee, various Board offices, and community stakeholders to monitor budget proposals and prepare impact statements.

Governor Brown's January budget proposal for 2012-13 included child development reimbursement rates that were significantly below the actual cost of providing care, eligibility ceilings that eliminated assistance well before families could afford the full cost of care, and parents enrolled in school or training were not eligible for child development subsidies. In addition, the Governor proposed to restructure child care and development (except Part-day State Preschool) by shifting administration from the CDE to county welfare departments effective fiscal year 2013-14. While the Governor's May Revise contained modifications to his original proposal for significantly reducing funding for child care and development services, his overall plan to shift most services to the county welfare programs remained intact.

These proposals were not well received by a variety of stakeholders. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors' motion and resulting letters to the Governor and Legislative delegation urging that subsidized services remain with CDE weighed heavily in the debate.

The legislature rejected the Governor's proposal to significantly alter the administration of subsidized child care and development services and sought other means for achieving cost savings. The following is a brief summary, highlighting key decisions in the adopted budget affecting child development services:

- Funds all State Preschool (e.g. Part-day) slots within Proposition 98; the Superintendent of Public Instruction is required to encourage State Preschool contracting agencies to offer wraparound general child care and development services for the remainder of the day or year to meet the needs of eligible parents.

- Requires fees to be assessed and collected for families participating in Part-day State Preschool, as well as, wraparound child care services and other child care and development services.
- Reduces contract amounts for General Child Care, Migrant Day Care, the Alternative Payment (AP) Program (see note below regarding additional reduction to the AP Program), CalWORKs Stage 3 Child Care, and the Allowance for Handicapped Program by 8.7 percent effective July 1, 2012.
 - CDE may consider the contractor's performance and whether the contract serves children in underserved areas when determining contract reductions; however, the aggregate reduction must be achieved.
 - As of July 1, 2012, programs are to dis-enroll families beginning with the highest income family relative to family size followed by families with the same income but enrolled the longest are to be dis-enrolled second. Families with children receiving child protective services or deemed at risk for neglect or abuse, regardless of family income, are lowest priority for dis-enrollment.

In addition, the Governor implemented his line item veto implementing deeper cuts to child development services than was negotiated with the Legislature. These reductions include:

- Reduced funding for Part-day State Preschool by 5.8 percent, eliminating an additional 12,500 slots statewide.
- Reduced funding for the AP Program by an additional 9.2 percent, eliminating approximately 3,400 slots for 2012-13.
- Eliminated State augmentation for supplemental child nutrition reimbursement to private child care centers.

Attachment I compares allocations for child care and development in 2011-12 with 2012-13.

Goal 3. County departments will work collaboratively with each other and community partners to maximize the utilization of available resources, support quality improvements, and promote the delivery of integrated services for children and their families. Particular emphasis will be placed on connecting the following populations to child development resources and when appropriate, early intervention services:

- CalWORKs families who are homeless and have young children
- Children under the supervision of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation Department, including those in foster care, kin care, and with their families
- Teen parents under the jurisdiction of DCFS and/or the Probation Department.

At their June 13, 2012 meeting, members of the Roundtable and representatives of the Service Integration Branch Housing and Homeless Initiatives responded to "*Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness in Los Angeles County*," a document prepared for the Roundtable.

This document was informed by a December 2011 meeting with representatives of the County Departments of Mental Health, Public Social Services, CEO, and representatives of the Roundtable. The document highlights the unique needs of young children who experience the trauma of homelessness and the scarcity of appropriate services available to them. As a result of this discussion, the Roundtable offered to assist in the development of the County's Regional Homeless Family Solutions Centers.

In addition, a meeting has been scheduled with representatives of Senator Carol Liu, the Service Integration Branch, and the Roundtable to respond to the Senator's interest in the report and possible action.

The Office of Child Care will be directing the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (described on page 1) to child development programs serving children participating in the DCFS Alternative Payment Program (APP). Under this type of subsidy program, the parent or guardian is able to enroll the children in a licensed, community-based child development center or family child care home. Children who have experienced the trauma of abuse and/or neglect often present challenging behaviors. The Race to Top Early Learning Challenge Grant will provide on-site coaching, training, program observations and ratings, and financial incentives to these child development programs. These intensive supports can positively impact the quality of care provided to children and have the potential to improve child outcomes.

In an effort to promote the value of high quality child development services and maximize the use of these resources, the Office of Child Care provided a workshop to DCFS staff at the Compton office and distributed copies of "*For Teen Parents: A Guide to Child Care and Development Programs*." Participants reported that the discussion of resources was particularly helpful to line staff. In addition, the CEO and Roundtable are members of the Los Angeles Partnership for Strengthening Families, a collaborative response to a Federal funding opportunity aimed at strengthening the child welfare-child development connection and promoting protective factors among DCFS client families.

Goal 4. County departments will work collaboratively with the Los Angeles County Office of Education, key school districts, and community-based child development services to integrate services, thereby supporting effective:

- Articulation between child development and kindergarten
- Design of developmentally appropriate transitional kindergarten programs
- Identification and utilization of new or nontraditional funding

At their annual retreat on July 11, 2012, the Roundtable agreed to address this goal during the 2012-13 year. Broad scale implementation of transitional kindergarten, while threatened during budget negotiations, is now underway.

During this time of shrinking resources, there is increasing interest in encouraging school districts to use Title I funds for early education services. The Roundtable will also be reviewing this issue in the coming months.

Goal 5. The CEO will facilitate County department efforts to work internally, across departments and with community partners, to integrate the Strengthening Families Approach (SFA) and Protective Factors into their work with children, families, and communities; and engage families in high quality child development services. The CEO, with assistance from the Center for the Study of Social Policy and key local partners, will establish a multidisciplinary SFA learning community designed to support ongoing professional development and SFA projects that are underway or emerging in County departments.

Ten County departments are participating in the Los Angeles County Strengthening Families Learning Community. As previously reported, the Learning Community was launched on January 26, 2012. A conversation during that meeting resulted in a collaborative project between Mental Health and the Public Library. This collaboration, known as the Mental Health Parenting Program, will bring a new level of parent supports to families in Los Angeles County.

The Learning Community is reviewing how the five Protective Factors can be integrated into the work of each department for the purpose of supporting families, buffering risk and promoting the optimum development of all children. There has been significant interest in the Learning Community, both from local funders and state agencies.

Conclusion

Despite the fiscal challenges confronting families, communities and government, progress has been made on implementing the Child Care Policy Framework. Should your staff have questions regarding this report, they can contact Trish Ploehn at (213) 974-4532 or tploehn@ceo.lacounty.gov

WTF:AJ:TP
LB:KMS:km

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel

Attachment I - Comparison between 2011-12 Budget and Proposed 2012-13 Budget

Program	2011-12 Budget Act ⁱ	Proposed 2012-13 Budget ^{ii, iii}
	Total	State/CCDF
Proposition 98 General Fund		
State Preschool	\$373,695,000	\$481,003,000 ^{iv}
Non-Proposition 98 General Fund		
General Child Development	\$685,923,000	\$464,913,000
Migrant Child Care	\$29,085,000	\$26,056,000
Alternative Payment (AP) Program	\$216,586,000	\$174,031,000 ^v
CalWORKs Stage 2 (AP)	\$442,456,000	\$419,286,000
CalWORKs Stage 3 (AP)	\$145,955,000	\$148,425,000
Resource and Referral Programs	\$18,688,000	\$18,688,000
Handicap Allowance	\$1,620,000	\$1,452,000
CA Child Care Initiative	\$225,000	\$225,000
Quality Improvement (see Table 2 for allocation detail)	\$49,654,000	\$49,490,000
Local Planning Councils	\$3,319,000	\$3,319,000
Accounts Payable	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
Non-Proposition 98 Sub-total	\$1,597,511,000	\$1,309,885,000^{vi}
Child Care Facilities Revolving Fund	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)	\$0	\$0
Growth	\$0	\$0
Proposition 98 and non-Proposition 98 Sub-total	\$1,976,206,000	\$1,795,888,000
Learning Supports		
After School and Education Safety Program	\$547,066,000	\$547,025,000
21 st Century Community Learning Centers	\$157,605,000	\$143,949,000 ^{vii}
Cal-SAFE Child Care	\$24,778,000	\$24,778,000
Pregnant Minor Program	\$13,327,000	\$13,327,000
Learning Supports Totals	\$742,776,000	\$729,079,000
California Community Colleges^{viii}		
Special Services for CalWORKs Recipients	\$26,695,000 ^{ix}	\$26,695,000 ^x
Campus Child Care Tax Bailout	\$3,350,000 ^{xi}	\$3,350,000 ^{xi}
Other		
State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Development		\$162,000 ^{xiii}
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Fund		\$10,059,000 ^{xiv}

ⁱ SB 87 (Chapter 33, Approved June 30, 1011).

ⁱⁱ AB 1464, Chapter 21: 2012-13 Budget, Approved: June 27, 2012; 6110-196-0001.

ⁱⁱⁱ AB 1497, Chapter 29: Budget Act of 2012, Approved: June 27, 2012; 6110-194-0001.

^{iv} The Governor used his line item veto authority to reduce funding for Part-day State Preschool by \$30 million. Of the total allocation for State Preschool, \$5 million is available for the family literacy supplemental grant.

^v The Governor used his line item veto authority to reduce funding to the AP Program by an additional \$20 million.

^{vi} Of the \$1.3 billion in non Proposition 98 General Fund, \$559 million is federal funds.

^{vii} Of the funding allocation to 21st Century Community Learning Centers, \$22,382,000 is one-time carryover from prior years payable from the federal trust fund.

^{viii} AB 1497, Chapter 29: Budget Act of 2012, Approved: June 27, 2012; 6870-101-0001.

^{ix} For recipients transitioning from welfare to self-sufficiency through coordinated services offered at community colleges, including work study, educational related work experience, job placement, child care services, and coordination with county welfare office to determine eligibility and availability of services.

^x For recipients transitioning from welfare to self-sufficiency through coordinated services offered at community colleges, including work study, educational related work experience, job placement, child care services, and coordination with county welfare office to determine eligibility and availability of services.

^{xi} For community college child care and development programs.

^{xii} For community college child care and development programs.

^{xiii} AB 1464, Chapter 21: 2012-13 Budget, Approved: June 27, 2012; 6110-1996-0001.

^{xiv} AB 1464, Chapter 21: 2012-13 Budget, Approved: June 27, 2012; 6110-200-0001.



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

January 31, 2013

To: Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

FOURTH STATUS REPORT ON THE CHILD CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

On March 29, 2011, the Board adopted the updated Child Care Policy Framework and a series of related recommendations. As a part of that action, the Office of Child Care, within the Service Integration Branch of the Chief Executive Office, was directed to provide status reports in July and January of each year through 2013. This is the fourth status report on the implementation of the Child Care Policy Framework, covering the period of July 1 through December 31, 2012, and is organized by the goals of the Child Care Policy Framework.

Goal 1. The quality of child development services in Los Angeles County will be improved as the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP) is expanded and support services to STEP participants are intensified.

STEP is a child care quality rating and support system developed by the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable) and administered by the Office of Child Care. The pilot phase of STEP was funded primarily by First 5 LA, from August 2008 through November 2011. As of December 2011, STEP has been funded by Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) as a project of the Early Childhood Workforce Consortium.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

**Please Conserve Paper – This Document and Copies are Two-Sided
Intra-County Correspondence Sent Electronically Only**

The following are highlights of STEP accomplishments for this reporting period:

- In September, 26 programs were referred to our partner, the UCLA-Center for Improving Child Care Quality, for reviews;
- Quality Improvement Grant requests are being processed for 30 STEP programs;
- 16 quality improvement trainings were conducted involving 129 STEP participants; and
- As a part of its expansion effort, STEP initiated the recruitment of family child care homes and child care centers in Boyle Heights, Watts/Willowbrook, San Fernando, Torrance and Lancaster. A sample recruitment brochure is attached.
- In December 2012, STEP launched three innovative services:
 1. STEP Renewal: Family child care providers who were early participants in the STEP pilot phase were encouraged to renew their ratings and informed of incentives to continue their participation in STEP;
 2. STEP Peer Advisor and Leader: Family child care providers who earned STEP ratings of three or higher were invited to become Peer Advisors and mentor other family child care providers. Programs rated at STEP, three have demonstrated substantially higher staff qualifications, developmentally appropriate learning environments, and understanding of and connection to community resources; and
 3. Sid the Science Kid: STEP is collaborating with the UCLA Early Care and Education Program on a Boeing funded project to implement *Sid the Science Kid* curriculum in family child care homes. STEP family child care providers in Inglewood were invited to participate in this unique training opportunity. Various studies of early care and education programs have cited weaknesses in the area of "instructional support." This project offers family child care providers access to a curriculum and the opportunity to develop their understanding of foundational math and science concepts.

As a result of our experience with STEP, the Office of Child Care was invited to participate in the California Department of Education's (CDE) application to Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTT-ELCG). This application was designed to support local child care rating and improvement efforts already underway in 16 counties. Los Angeles County was the only jurisdiction with two participants, STEP and LAUP.

CDE was notified that their application was successful in December 2011. Planning activities with CDE and the 15 other counties began in early 2012 and on October 30, 2012, the Board of Supervisors accepted a multi-year contract to implement the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant in Los Angeles County. This project will run through December 2015, and the total funding for this project is \$5,149,500. LAUP will be operating a similar contract. Services developed under RTT-ELCG are intended to target at-risk children, including those who are low-income, infants and toddlers, at risk of abuse and/or neglect, and dual language learners.

During the months of November and December, the Office of Child Care finalized agreements with:

- UCLA – Center for Improving Child Care Quality to conduct program ratings;
- Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles to provide coaching services to STEP participants; and
- Project Outreach Consultant to assist in recruiting family child care homes and child care centers to participate in RTT-ELCG.

An RTT-ELCG component has been added to the Office of Child Care web page and agreements with a number of partners have jump-started recruitment efforts. This project is committed to serving 175 programs by providing technical assistance and on-site coaching; quality improvement grants; and multiple program ratings. Volunteers of America-Los Angeles and California Children's Academy have committed 40 and 10 child development centers respectively to participate in RTT-ELCG. Both of these organizations have child development programs located throughout Los Angeles County. As a result of a partnership with the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF), at least 15 family child providers, involved in MAOF networks will be participating in RTT-ELCG. These family child care homes are located in Hawaiian Gardens, Norwalk, Gardena, El Monte, and South El Monte. And finally, the Office of Child Care is working with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to identify early care and education programs serving DCFS children in the Vermont Corridor.

Goal 2. Local, State and Federal policies and budgets will strengthen the child development infrastructure and support the expansion of high quality child development services that integrate family support, health, mental health and other relevant services into their operations.

With the implementation of the 2012-13 California State budget, Los Angeles County has experienced reductions in State Preschool Programs, Alternative Payment Programs, and General Child Care. In addition, State Preschool Programs, the majority of which provide part-day school readiness services for low-income children between three and five years of age, are now required to assess and collect parent fees. CDE will be reporting to the Legislature on the number of children statewide who lose access to these services as a result of non-payment of family fees. As that information becomes available, the Office of Child Care will engage in a review to determine the impact on children and families in Los Angeles County.

In addition, the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and the Child Care Planning Committee contributed to the County's State and Federal legislative platforms.

Recognizing the increasingly important role of federal resources to the early care and education sector, the Roundtable devoted a portion of its December meeting to the Federal Budget process, including the implications of sequestration for early care and education. Both Head Start and the Child Care and Development Block Grant continue to be at risk for substantial cuts. Materials were prepared on these issues and are available on the Office of Child Care's website.

Goal 3. County departments will work collaboratively with each other and community partners to maximize the utilization of available resources, support quality improvements and promote the delivery of integrated services for children and their families. Particular emphasis will be placed on connecting the following populations to child development resources and when appropriate, early intervention services:

- CalWORKs families who are homeless and have young children;
- Children under the supervision of DCFS and the Probation Department, including those in foster care, kin care and with their families; and
- Teen parents under the jurisdiction of DCFS and/or the Probation Department.

In response to a request from the Office of Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, the Roundtable devoted a portion of its November 14, 2012 meeting agenda to providing input on the City of Los Angeles Consolidated Plan. This plan is intended to serve as a blueprint for how the City will invest in low income neighborhoods and build sustainable communities over the next five years, using four grants Federal Housing and Urban Development grants, including:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG);
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME);

- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG); and
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Grant (HOPWA).

In developing this plan, City representatives engaged a range of community members and organizations in dialogue to identify housing and community development priorities.

The Roundtable is also working with the CEO Homeless Coordinator regarding implementation of the Family Solution Centers and strategies to connect Family Solution Center clients to early care and education services.

Goal 4. County departments will work collaboratively with the Los Angeles County Office of Education, key school districts and community-based child development services to integrate services, thereby supporting effective:

- Articulation between child development and kindergarten;
- Design of developmentally appropriate transitional kindergarten programs; and
- Identification and utilization of new or nontraditional funding.

Transitional Kindergarten in Los Angeles County

The December 2012 Roundtable meeting provided a forum for a multi-faceted presentation on Transitional Kindergarten (TK). Speakers addressed the following issues:

- Ms. Araceli Sandoval, with Preschool California, provided an overview of TK including SB 1381 and its intent. As a result of SB 1381, children entering kindergarten in 2014-15 will be required to be five years of age by September 1, 2014. TK, the first year of a two-year kindergarten program, is intended to provide "young kindergarteners with the gift of time," through a developmentally appropriate program that bridges the early care and education and K-12 systems;
- Ms. Yvette Streeter and Ms. Kristina Damon with the Long Beach Unified School District described their experience in moving from the Preppy Kindergarten pilot in 2007 involving one classroom, to a district wide system of 26 transitional kindergarten classrooms located at 26 elementary schools throughout the District;

- Ms. Maureen Diekmann, with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), discussed the LAUSD experience with TK which now serves 3,400 children; and
- Ms. Judith Sanchez, with Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), addressed the support services which LACOE provides to school districts as they design and implement TK.

New and Nontraditional Funding Opportunities

The Roundtable continues to monitor planning for an Educare program in Los Angeles County. The first Educare program was established in Chicago in 2000. Using a public-private partnership model, Educare programs are research based; serve children from birth through five years of age; provide services full-day, full-year; utilize small class sizes and highly qualified staff; and offer comprehensive services for children and their families. Currently the Educare Network includes 17 programs throughout the United States. The first Educare program in California is in development in San Jose.

At the November 2012 Roundtable meeting, Ms. Sonia Campos-Rivera with the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce updated the Roundtable on local Educare planning efforts. She reported that the Montebello, Pasadena, Lynwood, and Long Beach School districts are interested in hosting an Educare program. Other Educare programs have relied heavily on Head Start funding. Unfortunately, Head Start funding decisions which were expected to be announced by January 2013 have been delayed to Spring 2013. As a result, the announcement of a local Educare program host will also be delayed.

Currently, the goal is to establish a single Educare program in Los Angeles County. The comprehensive nature of Educare services substantially increases the per child costs, making broad scale replication unlikely. However, the opportunity to establish such a program could inform our understanding of program impacts and contribute to the replication of services with the potential for significant and positive outcomes.

Goal 5. The Chief Executive Office (CEO) will facilitate County department efforts to work internally, across departments and with community partners, to integrate the Strengthening Families Approach (SFA) and Protective Factors into their work with children, families, and communities; and engage families in high quality child development services. The CEO, with assistance from the Center for the Study of Social Policy and key local partners, will establish a multidisciplinary SFA learning community designed to support ongoing professional development and SFA projects that are underway or emerging in County departments.

Ten County departments are participating in the Los Angeles County Strengthening Families Learning Community. While Learning Community members continue to explore, test and learn how the five Protective Factors can be integrated into their work for the purpose of supporting families, there is considerable interest in how to connect the Learning Community and its members, to other Strengthening Families efforts underway in the community. Rather than duplicating or fragmenting efforts, the Learning Community is committed to enhancing and deepening efforts to integrate protective factors into community and County services.

As a part of that process, members of the Strengthening Families Learning Community collaborated on the development of a proposal to the Federal Administration of Children, Youth and Families in June 2012. We were recently informed that proposal was not accepted for funding, however, a local foundation is interested in supporting the project.

Plans are underway to engage the Strengthening Families Learning Community in the development and implementation of the family engagement component of the RTT-ELCG program rating rubric.

Conclusion

The economic outlook appears to be improving and Governor Brown's proposed budget for 2013-14 is noteworthy for more than cuts. In fact, the Governor is proposing to reinvest in education. Unfortunately, that reinvestment does not extend to the early care and education sector. Research from economics, neuroscience, and education has demonstrated the cost effectiveness of programs which support the healthy development of young children over programs aimed at remediation in elementary and high school. This reality will inform our work going forward.

Should your staff have questions regarding this report, they can contact Trish Ploehn at (213) 974-4532 or via e-mail at TPloehn@ceo.lacounty.gov.

WTF:AJ:TP
LB:KMS:km

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Policy Roundtable for Child Care

How can I participate in the RTT-ELC Pilot?

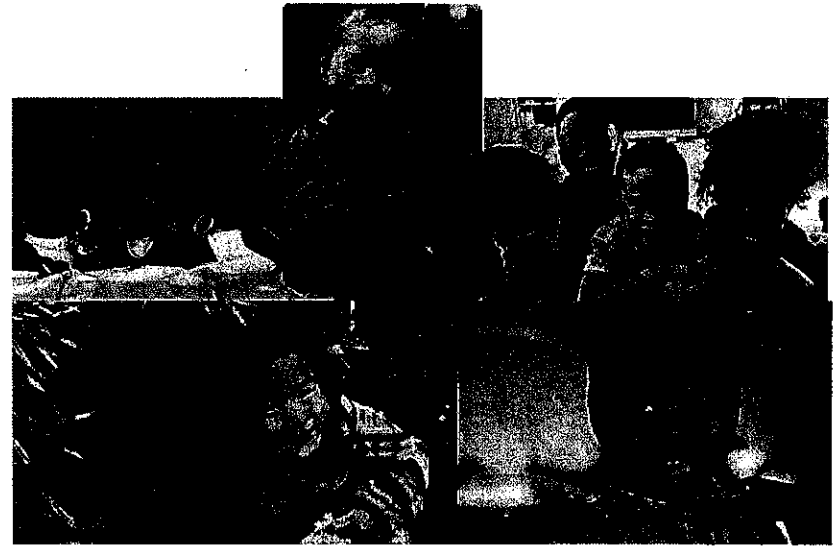
Please go to the Office of Child Care website (www.childcare.lacounty.gov) to download a RTT-ELC Pilot application packet. To request an application via mail, call the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-1188.

Who Developed RTT-ELC Pilot?

California recently received a highly competitive Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) federal grant to improve the quality of early learning programs and close the achievement gap for vulnerable young children. Over the next three years, California, led by local efforts in 16 counties in collaboration with the California Department of Education, will work together to ensure positive outcomes for the state's infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Where can I get more information?

Please contact the Los Angeles County Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4103 or on the Web at www.childcare.lacounty.gov.



RTT-ELC Pilot

A Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement System



Information Brochure

222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor Los Angeles, California 90012
Office: (213) 974-4103 www.childcare.lacounty.gov

222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor Los Angeles, California 90012
Office: (213) 974-4103 www.childcare.lacounty.gov

What is the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Pilot ?

RTT-ELC is a new child care quality rating and improvement system being piloted in Los Angeles County. The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) is a federally funded pilot program that will improve the quality of licensed child care programs. RTT-ELC's goal is to close the achievement gap for young children ages birth to five who are **"high needs"** (e.g. low-income, dual language learners (DLL), have special needs or are under the supervision of child protective services).

What will RTT-ELC do in Los Angeles County?

The Los Angeles County Office of Child Care will use RTT-ELC funds to improve the quality of licensed family child care homes and center-based programs serving high need children. Our goal is to serve up to 175 child care programs by providing quality rating assessments, quality improvement training, coaching and financial incentives.

The end goal of California's RTT-ELC effort is that young children, participate those who are low-income, dual language learners (DLL), or children with disabilities or developmental delays have access to high quality early learning programs so that they thrive in their early learning settings and succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

Who can participate in the RTT-ELC Pilot?

Licensed family child care homes and child development centers that are serving **high needs children** ages birth to five may volunteer to participate in our RTT-ELC Pilot program. Eligible programs must have a child care license for at least 12 months and must meet the RTT-ELC Pilot's licensing standards. At this time, child care programs participating in the Steps to Excellence Program (STEP) or funded by the Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) are not eligible to participate in the RTT-ELC Pilot.

How can the RTT-ELC Pilot benefit my child care program?

Child care programs that choose to participate in our RTT-ELC pilot program will be eligible to receive:

- Grants to help you improve your child care program
- 2 free quality assessments of your child care program (a service valued at \$2,000 per visit)
- Coaching and support to help you improve the quality of your child care program (a service valued at \$2,300 per year)
- Opportunities to meet and network with child care providers

Our RTT-ELC funding will expire December 31, 2015. Therefore, our services will be offered up until that date.

How will the RTT-ELC Pilot rate Child Care quality?

The RTT-ELC Pilot examines three core areas of a child care program's operation. These areas are:



Core I –Child Development and School Readiness



Core II –Teachers and Teaching



Core III –Program and Environment

Each participating program will receive a quality rating score after completing an on-site observation. Results will be shared with program staff and promoted on the Office of Child Care's website.